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ABSTRACT

Recent revenue curtailments at both state and federal levels and the increasing importance of external funding have established a need to set priorities for the expansion and continuance of funded research and sponsored projects within the university or college. This study developed a set of priorities for external funding possibilities in an urban multi-unit community college district by structuring a preliminary list of funding categories and asking all faculty and administrative staff of the district (650 individuals) to identify themselves as faculty or administrative staff and to rank the priorities from one (the highest) to ten for the next five years. Of the categories--(1) human services, (2) economic development/urban problems, (3) media and technology-related, (4) transfer programs, (5) health sciences, (6) student services, (7) leisure time, (8) basic skills, (9) technology education, and (10) environment/national and international affairs--basic skills was ranked either first, second, or third by 64% of the responding group of 207 faculty members and administrators. Transfer programs and economic development ranked fourth and fifth respectively. Faculty priorities were much the same as the total group's, while administrators ranked economic development as first priority. The survey instrument is appended. (LS)

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ASSESSMENT FOR PRIORITIES FOR SPECIAL PROJECTS

A Paper Presented to

California Association for Institutional Research

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NEED FOR THE STUDY

With recent revenue curtailments at both the state and national levels, it has become apparent that the chase after dollars in the public sector has been accelerated to the point that the goals of higher education are often forgotten in the chaos of the scurry. For several years research administrators have sensed a need to concentrate upon the purpose of organized fiscal support for research and special projects within higher education. With severe budgetary cutbacks, which have occurred in California and other locales throughout the nation, there has been a tendency to scramble after dollars somewhat unrelated frequently to the mission of the institution engaged in the foray. In order to maintain their solvency and individual integrity educational institutions must justify support for organized research and educational special projects on the basis of their own merit and not upon the justification of an availability of categorical dollars.

This challenge, which currently faces the academic community, would indicate a need for research as a management tool in setting priorities for the expansion and continuance of funded research and sponsored projects within the college or university. Such a prioritization should then be related to applications for external funding. External funding refers to those derived from governmental grants and contracts, private foundations, and corporate and individual grants and gifts.

THE PROBLEM

The purpose of the study was develop a set of priorities for external funding possibilities in an urban multi-unit community college district. The priorities would reflect previously stated institutional priorities of the community college district as well as the immediately discerned needs of the

institution as expressed by the faculty and administrative staff. The college sought to determine the following:

1) A rational plan for applications for external funds utilizing preset priorities.

2) The expressed needs of the immediate academic community for funding rather than targeted priorities of funding agencies.

The objectives of the assessment process at the college were these:

- A list of prioritized categorical funding areas to use in planning future funding efforts.
- An impetus for action, rather than reaction, in initiating funding efforts with federal, state, and private sources.

The college attempted to arrive at a set of priorities which could be utilized over a five-year period in seeking funds through governmental grants and contracts, solicitation from private foundations, and through corporate gifts. Medium-range funding needs were to be identified so that the college would be self-determining in its funding applications rather than a respondent to solicitations from governmental and private agencies. Thus, the perceived needs of the college for external funding would be realized in procurement activities.

The objectives of the study were based upon the following assumptions:

1. That the present full-time faculty and administrative staff of the institution represented the most qualified judges to rank a list of priorities for which to seek external funding during the next five years.

2. That the Instructional/Instructional Personnel Development Advisory Committees on all campuses of the college and the Director of Grants Planning and Management of the college district were best qualified to delineate a list of priorities for external funding, which would meet student, community, and instructional needs.

3. That the Chancellor's Cabinet as a key policy group in the college was best qualified to further refine a delineation of priorities for external funding which would meet the needs of the academic community and the greater geographical community during the years 1979 to 1984.

4. That the Director of Grants Planning and Management of the college district was best qualified to finalize refinement of the priorities for external funding to be ranked because of extensive knowledge and familiarity with categorical funded programs, external funding possibilities, and college funding priorities.

5. That the academic bodies queried were honest and sincere in their responses and refinements of the priorities to be ranked and that all faculty and administrative staff participating in the ranking of priorities for external funding were sincere and reflective in their judgements.

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

The Director of Grants Planning and Management of the college structured a preliminary list of funding categories, which was based upon the classification system within The Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance. Further direction in categorical aid classifications was obtained through utilization of the college's Lifelong Learning Institute's "Non-Credit Course Coding System," which was divided into five major categories. Contacts with faculty members familiar with funded projects, particularly those who had functioned as project directors, resulted in further input for the development of a priorities list by the director. This list was refined by a preliminary ranking by the Instructional/Instructional Personnel Development Advisory Committees on the three campuses of the college. The Chancellor's Cabinet, a key policy group, made up of ten district and campus administrators, also participated in a preliminary assessment of the priorities. Comments of these

two academic/administrative groups were incorporated in grouping categorical funding aid areas. Utilization of terms for the traditional disciplines of the university and the professional school does not lend itself to the needs of the two-year college, thus research areas which might make up categories in upper division institutions were not employed for the purposes of this assessment. Institutional priorities of the updated master plan were also included.

After final refinement of the priorities list by the director, who was the researcher for this study, the Priorities Ranking for External Funds, a copy of which may be found in the Appendix of this study, was developed and distributed to all faculty and administrative staff of the community college district. This was accomplished through the campus mailing system, and approximately six hundred and fifty copies were distributed.

Priorities were listed in ten groupings, and respondents were requested to rank these priorities 1 to 10 for the next five years, with 1 as the highest priority. Categories were listed as follows:

1. Human Services - Human Development
2. Economic Development - Urban Problems
3. Media and Technology Related
4. Student Services
5. Health Sciences
6. Transfer Programs - General Education
7. Leisure Time - Cultural Enrichment
8. Basic Skills
9. Technology Education and Training
10. Environment - National and International Affairs

Respondents, acting as judges, were asked to identify themselves only by campus location and to classify themselves as "Faculty" or "Administrative Staff."

Hypotheses

Research hypotheses were stated as follows:

1. Administrative staff and faculty in community college districts tend to differ on the ranking of priorities for external funding.

2. Urban campus needs and priorities tend to differ from suburban campus needs and priorities when related to external funding.

3. Community college district administrative personnel tend to differ from campus faculty and administrative personnel in setting priorities for external funding of special projects.

Data Collection

The ranking form with an accompanying memorandum asking for a return in approximately two and one-half weeks was distributed to all campuses and the district administrative offices of the community college district. The ranking form was a simple one-page document.

A total of 207 usable returns was received. This total represented approximately one-third of the total population of the college administrative staff and faculty. Responses from the faculty on all three campuses tallied 149, with a total of 40 administrative staff responding throughout the district. Eighteen returns were received from the instructional advisory committees and the cabinet in the preliminary rankings, and these rankings were tallied for the total prioritization of the community college district.

Although respondents were not asked to identify themselves one campus president signed the ranking document, and the Vice Chancellor for Financial and Management Services, who was responsible for the expenditure of many millions of dollars for educational services, signed the document, which had not been completed and commented, "I am really not qualified to complete this."

Analysis of Data

The rankings for each of the ten categories of funding were tallied for the total population and for administrative staff and faculty at each campus and at the district administrative offices. The instructional advisory committees and the cabinet had been tallied initially. Cross-classifications of rankings were disregarded at this point.

FINDINGS

Priorities Ranking of Total Population

The ranking responses received from the total population of faculty and administrators revealed a first priority of basic skills as an external funding need. The same category also ranked second and third with the total group indicating an awareness of the instructional area. Sixty-eight percent of the total respondents ranked this priority as first, second, or third. The same group ranked transfer programs as a fourth priority, and economic development ranked as a fifth priority. Health sciences ranked sixth with the total group, and media and technology related instruction ranked seventh. Student services tied for eighth and ninth ranks, and leisure time/cultural enrichment ranked tenth in priorities.

Priorities Ranking of Total Faculty

This group responded in a similar manner in prioritizing as did the group as a whole. Faculty also tied ranks for first, second, and third for basic skills funding although student services moved to a ninth place ranking. Health sciences ranked fourth with faculty, and there was a tie for fifth place between human services and economic development. Aggregate responses for the faculty group are shown in Table 1 reflected in the ranking of categories for funding.

Table 1

Priorities Ranking of Total Population, Total Faculty, and Total Staff

Category for External Funding Priority	Total Population	Total Faculty	Total Staff
Human Services - Human Development		5th	
Economic Development - Urban Problems	5th	5th	1st/4th/5th
Media and Technology Related	7th		2nd/7th
Student Services	8th/9th	8th/9th	10th
Health Sciences	6th	4th/6th	5th/6th
Transfer Programs - General Education	4th		
Leisure Time - Cultural Enrichment	10th	7th/10th	8th/9th/10th
Basic Skills	1st/2nd/3rd	1st/2nd/3rd	2nd/3rd
Technology Education and Training			2nd
Environment - National and International Affairs			2nd/9th

Priorities Ranking of Total Staff

Administrative staff differed in responses for the ranking of priorities from the faculty group as a whole and with the total population. Staff ranked economic development - urban problems as a first priority. The second place ranking for administrative staff indicated scattered priorities with a four-way tie among media technology related, basic skills, technology education and training, and environment/national and international affairs. Administrative staff exhibited more ties in ranks than any other group in the study.

Comparison of Campus Rankings of Priorities

The urban campus, composed of a large minority population, ranked basic skills as a first and third priority. A suburban campus with a high percentage of transfer students ranked transfer programs as the top priority, with basic skills as the second priority. Another suburban campus, with a mixed social and economic population group, ranked basic skills as the first priority, with transfer programs second. It is noted that no campus considered individually appeared to agree with the administrative staff rankings.

Camparison of District Administration Rankings and Faculty Rankings

While faculty on all campuses appeared primarily concerned with basic skills and transfer programs as top priorities for funding, the district administrative staff ranked economic development urban problems as first priority and technology education and training as second priority. The district staff priorities appeared to relate closely to the total staff group priorities. The district administrative staff also ranked student services tenth priority as did the total staff group composed of both district and campus officers.

Summary of Ranking Responses

Basic skills was a top priority with the total population responding in the community college district ranking process. Campus-based personnel, particularly, appeared to be more concerned about instructional programs than did administrative staff, who ranked economic development and urban problems as a top priority. Transfer programs was not an area of total agreement in faculty priority rankings, for the campus locale of the respondent affected the respondent's ranking.

CONCLUSIONS

An analysis of the data received provided a basis for the following conclusions in relation to the priorities ranking accomplished by the faculty and administrative staff of an urban community college district. The purpose of the study was to develop a set of priorities for external funding possibilities in such a district, and the researcher concluded the following:

1. Basic skills funding was a top priority of the total population responding in the community college district.
2. Transfer programs and general education was a less important priority for the total population responding.
3. Faculty and administrative staff appeared to differ in first priorities for the seeking of external funding.
4. Campuses appeared to differ from other campuses in prioritizing.
5. Administrative staff, whether located in the district administration or on campuses, appeared to relate closely in priority rankings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Cognizant of the findings and conclusions in this study, the following recommendations are formulated:

1. Priorities rankings should be utilized in the funding procurement process.

2. Greater communication should take place between faculty and administrative staff regarding funding priorities.

3. Further prioritizations should take place in the future within the college district with further refinements of specific priorities.

APPENDIX

PRIORITIES RANKING FOR EXTERNAL FUNDING

Rank top 10 priorities for the College's external funding. Rank 1 to 10 for the next five years, with one as the highest priority.

1. Human Services - Human Development
   Aging, Handicapped, Learning Disability, Drug/Alcohol, Child Abuse, Drug Abuse, Rape Crisis, Rehabilitation _____

2. Economic Development - Urban Problems
   Skills Centers, Small Business, Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, Employment Training Programs, Short-Term Career Programs _____

3. Media and Technology-Related
   Computers, Home Instruction, At-site Instruction _____

4. Student Services
   Dormitories-Housing, Social Problem Clinics, Financial Aid, Veterans Programs _____

5. Health Sciences, Health Planning, Agriculture, Nutrition, Family Life _____

6. Transfer Programs, General Education, Traditional Arts, Sciences, and Humanities _____

7. Leisure Time - Cultural Enrichment
   Community Understanding _____

8. Basic Skills
   Development Education, Creative Thinking _____

9. Engineering Technology Education and Training
   Energy, Solar, Water Waste, Transportation _____

10. Environmental Problems and National and International Affairs _____

Comments:
For Specific Funding Needs

Campus_____ Faculty_____ Administrative Staff_____

Please return this ranking to the Office of Grants Planning and Management.
Your cooperation is appreciated.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES
APR 13 1979
CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES